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TAGS: PREL PGOV KISL SCUL US SU

SUBJECT: Sudan Scholars Organization Continues
Defamation Suit Against Charge

REF: KHARTOUM 636

¶1. According to local Arabic daily newspaper Akhbar Al-Youm, a public prosecutor in Khartoum North continues to maintain an active case against Charge Hume for alleged insults to Islam and defamation of the Prophet Mohammed. The case stems from a written complaint filed by the Sudan Scholars Organization in March 2006; the prosecutor has completed his investigation and is expected to submit a final report to the Ministry of Justice in the near future.

¶2. Comment: Although the Sudan Scholars Organization is a civil society body, its origins and financial support rest with the Sudanese government. As in other Arab nations, such groups, often known as the "Sultan's Scholars," are available to provide answers in religious affairs and order Fatwas as necessary. Sudan's body is composed principally of radical clerics, most of whom were educated in Saudi Arabia. Their following is limited, and they do not regard Sudan's Sufi sects as real Muslims. End comment.

STEINFELD